

Newly Planted Bent Greens

Expert gives valuable hints and advice on their care and treatment.
Topdressing and watering most essential

EDITOR'S NOTE:—The author of this splendid article is well-known in the golf field and has taken a very active part in the establishment of vegetatively planted creeping bent greens. He asks that his name not be used which modest request we are bound to respect.

NEWLY planted bent greens must be watered lightly twice daily until the cool weather sets in, then once daily for balance of the season. Watering must be done by hand with hose equipped with a rose, or adjustable nozzle to get a fine spray to avoid washing the newly planted stolons out of the ground. Have an extra man to carry the hose on and off the green. If one man only he will drag the hose across the green and draw a lot of stolons out of place.

The most careful and trustworthy men must be in charge of the watering—for the final success of the whole procedure depends a great deal on the watering during the first two or three weeks after planting. The surface of the green should be kept moist all the time. You cannot make up by extra watering one day for neglect the day before. This does not mean that the soil should be soaked, but kept moist so that the stolons will not dry out before they take root.

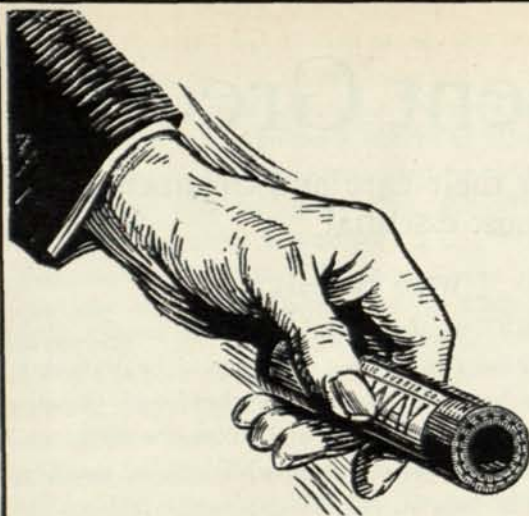
When To Start Mowing

IN THREE or four weeks there is usually growth enough to make mowing necessary. The grass should be first cut before it is over two inches long. Use mowers without grass catchers and allow the clippings to fall on the green as clippings with buds or nodes will take root and help fill in. After cutting—the next thing to do is to roll lightly then a very light topdressing and watered. The first two or three cuttings allow the clippings to fall on the green, then give a light top-dressing. Young tips will take root and grow even though no joints are visible.

The only way to produce good creeping bent turf is to keep it cut down closely—nearly as close as greens in play. If you do not do this you will have a coarse mat of runners and roots on the surface and it will be difficult to get the turf in really good putting condition even though it is topdressed liberally. Don't be afraid to cut creeping bent closely; that is what it needs to convert it into a good turf.



A VIEW OF THE FAMOUS LIDO LINKS LOOKING TOWARD THE CLUBHOUSE
It's a midiron one-shot hole along the beach. A year or two ago the old Atlantic got frisky and completely obliterated this hole. Lido is located near Long Beach, L. I.
Photo by Edwin Levick



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TOP-DRESSING is something which is absolutely essential. Judgment and care must be used in its application. The importance of top-dressing to the maintenance of ideal putting greens is in many cases underestimated.

Haphazard top-dressing is a mistake and harmful. Heavy top-dressing that cover the leaves will cut off the sunlight and many times kill the growing plants. Light and frequent top-dressings are better than a very heavy application at one time. Dressing 1/16 to 1/8 inch during the fall on newly planted greens should meet the condition.

Top-dressing material should contain a mixture of medium loam soil with equal parts of well rotted manure, thoroughly mixed and screened. While screening mix in 1/4 part of sharp sand that has been screened to remove the small stones and pebbles to protect the putting green mowers. Green manure contains fertile seeds and if used in making top dressing will give trouble from weeds and wild grass.

We suggest mixing 10 pounds of ammonium sulfate or ammonium phosphate with each cubic yard of top-dressing before applying—then watered in. The last top-dressing before the ground is frozen should be about 1/4 inch to give grass roots additional protection.

Hard Rolling Hurts Grass

IT IS far more satisfactory and practical from a turf-growing standpoint to fill the depressions by top-dressing than to roll out the bumps and ridges. An uneven surface is the cause of many of the ills with which putting greens are afflicted. It is often impossible to mow them without scalping the high points. Pounding away at the bumps and ridges with a roller does not do the grass any good.

No matter how unevenly the spreading is done the top-dressing should be worked off the leaves and around the crown of the grass and into the low places to build up a nice putting surface. The dressing can be easily worked around the grass and in depressions by using the back of a light hand-rake so as not to disturb the tender roots putting out on runners.

Coarse brooms or heavy sweeping must not be resorted to on growing greens. The runners with tender roots just setting will be torn loose and the growth and "matting in" of the turf retarded, besides producing coarse runners on the surface of the ground. If the cutting is started early enough and the grass kept cut short there will be no necessity of sweeping up the ends so the mower will cut them, nor will there be any of the plants blown or show indications of seeding.

Stolons after planting must be cut before the grass attains a height of more than two inches, and kept cut every day thereafter if needed.

A month or six weeks of good growing weather in the spring is usually all that it takes to make the grass grow together into a turf. If there are any bare spots six inches or more in diameter they should have small plugs of bent set in them. These plugs can be taken from thrifty tufts on the green or from around the mar-

gin of the green. Bare spots no larger than four to five inches will be quickly covered when the grass gets to growing vigorously. The treatment should always be aimed toward producing good turf and a smooth putting surface.

Before the water is turned off at the end of the season it will be advisable to give the green a good thorough dose of watering so it will soak in and feed the grass roots.

Preparing for Winter

I RECOMMEND that all of the putting greens be covered with brush during the winter months—

First—To prevent the strong winds from blowing the dirt from around the grass roots exposing them to the heavy freezing.

Second—To catch and hold the snow which will give the grass further protection during the extreme cold.

Third—To protect them from the animals before the snow falls and in early spring.

The amount of snow held on the greens will do no damage to the grass in the early spring during the melting process, providing the greens are properly constructed for surface drainage. The critical period will come in the early spring with reasonably warm days to start growth, then freezing during the night—therefore, water standing on the surface of the greens will be dangerous.

As soon as growth starts in the spring the same treatment as above outlined should be repeated—that is, top-dress and water to smooth up the surface and build up the turf.

Care During the Playing Season

DURING the playing season for best results—top-dressing should be applied at intervals of 25 to 30 days. A disadvantage resulting from long periods between top-dressing is that the surface of the green becomes packed making it difficult for the water to penetrate and too hard for a good putting surface. The frequency of these applications depends on the quality of the turf and that should be your guide.

There are **FOUR** things most important in keeping vegetative planted greens in perfect condition, viz:

- 1—Top-dressing
- 2—Ammonium sulfate or ammonium phosphate
- 3—Ample watering
- 4—Keeping the grass cut short

Ammonium sulfate or ammonium phosphate can be mixed in each top-dressing at the rate of 10 to 15 pounds to every cubic yard, or mixed with water and applied with the hydraulic sprayer at the rate of 10 to 15 pounds to 6,000 square foot surface after each application of top-dressing until the weather gets hot.

It will be necessary to remove the young weeds until the grass is well set and forms a good turf.

By carefully observing and following the above recommendations with average climatic conditions the most satisfactory putting green turf will be the result.

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